

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL BOMBAY PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY

AMCONSUL MADRAS PRIORITY

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

USUN NEW YORK 1844

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 9718

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, IN

SUBJ: CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION

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REF: NEW DELHI 9650

SUMMAR: THE ONLY OPPOSITION DEMONSTRATIONS OF NOTE -- AND THESE WERE NOT PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT -- OCCURRED IN BOMBAY CITY ON JULY 16 AND 17. A PROGRAM OF ACTION BY SOCIALIST PARTY PRESIDENT GEORGE FERNANDES IS CIRCULATING UNDERGROUND IN DELHI. ANTI-GOVERNMENT POSTERS ARE NOW BEGINNING TO APPEAR IN BOMBAY'S WORKING CLASS AREAS. THE JANATA FRONT GOVERNMENT IN GUJARAT REPORT-EDLY IS DIVIDED ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT SHOULD JOIN IN AGITATION AGAINST THE EMERGENCY. PAMPHLETS CRITICAL OF THE EMERGENCY ARE CIRCULATING IN GUJARAT. THREE UNDERGROUND BENGALI LANGUAGE PA-PERS HAVE APPEARED IN CALCUTTA. THEIR READERSHIP IS BELIEVED TO BE NO MORE THAN 2,000. BUSINESS CONTINUES AS USUAL IN NAGALAND, WITH THE EMERGENCY HAVING NO APPARENT EFFECT. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOI HAS WITHDRAWN THE PERMISSION GRANTED EARLIER TO FAMILY MEMBERS OF IMPRISONED POLITICIANS TO VISIT THEM. PRIME MINISTER GANDHI TOLD A JULY 17 CONFERENCE THAT IT WAS TOO EARLY TO RELAX AND THAT THE EMERGENCY REGULATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE STRICTLY ENFORCED. SHE CHASTISED THE FOREIGN PRESS FOR HAV-ING A DOUBLE STANDARD TOWARD CHINA AND INDIA. THE PRIME MINISTER REFERRED TO UNSPECIFIED "FORCES WHICH WANT TO INTERFERE IN THE IN-TERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES AND WHICH WERE FINANCING DIS-RUPTIVE ACTIVITY." DISCUSSING COORDINATION BETWEEN THE CPI AND THE CONGRESS PARTY, CONGRESS PARTY PRESIDENT BAROAH IS REPORTED IN A PERIODICAL AS SAYING THAT "WE HAVE CERTAINLY AN UNDER-STANDING ABOUT THE PROGRAMMES AND ULTIMATE OBJECTIVES." AC-CORDING TO CONGRESS PARTY MP'S, THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONSOON PARLIAMENTARY SESSION WILL BE DEVOTED TO A GOVERNMENT RESOLU-TION JUSTIFYING THE EMERGENCY, TO BE INTRODUCED BY AGRICULTURAL MINISTER JAGJIVAN RAM. EVEN IF THE OPPOSITION ATTEMPTS TO USE THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSIONS TO PROTEST, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THEY WILL HAVE MUCH EFFECT GIVEN THE STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON PRESS COVERAGE.

1. SOCIALIST PARTY PRESIDENT GEORGE FERNANDES, WHO THE POLICE ARE STILL TRYING TO LOCATE, IS CIRCULATING A PROGRAM FOR ACTION IN THE FORM OF A FOUR PAGE CIRCULAR IN DELHI. FERNANDES CALLS FOR THE UNDERGROUND NEWSPAPERS, POSTERS, A WHISPERING CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZATION OF STRIKES, PARALYSIS OF RADIO, POST, TELEGRAPHS, AND RAILWAYS, PROPAGANDA AMONG THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ARMY AND POLICE, AND UNDERGROUND COORDINATION OF A RESISTANCE MOVEMENT. HE ALSO CALLS FOR SETTING UP UNDERGROUND RADIO TRANS-MITTERS. (COMMENT: FERNANDES IS SMART, ENORMOUSLY ENERGETIC, BUT POLITICALLY NAIVE. A THOUGH THE ACTIONS OF RESISTERS THUS FAR HAVE INDEED BEEN ALONG THE LINES OF THE FIRST FEW OF FERNANDES' PROPOSALS, WE DOUBT THAT HE OR HIS LARGER PROGRAM WILL HAVE STAY-

ING POWER IN ORGANIZING AGAINST MRS. GANDHI.)

2. THE PRINCIPAL OVERT EFFORTS OF THE OPPOSITION TO PROTEST HAVE OCCURRED IN BOMBAY. OUR CONGEN REPORTS THAT OPPOSITION ELEMENTS OFFERED "SATYAGRAHA" AT BOMBAY'S BUSY CHURCHGATE RAILWAY STATION AT SIX P.M. JULY 16TH. FIVE PARTICIPANTS WERE ARRESTED ABOUT TEN MINUTES AFTER SPEAKERS BEGAN SHOUTING SLOGANS: "DOWN WITH EMERGENCY," "DOWN WITH DICTATORSHIP," ETC. "SATYAGRAHA" TOOK PLACE AT TIME WHEN PEOPLE WERE RETURNING FROM OFFICES AND HENCE A LARGE CROWD WAS ASSURED, BUT THE AUTHORITIES MOVED QUICKLY TO SQUELCH THE DEMONSTRATION. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SIMILAR EFFORTS WERE MADE IN SEVERAL SUBURBAN AREAS OF BOMBAY ON THE 16TH BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION OF THIS.

3. "SATYAGRAHA" LED BY JAN SAGH TOOK PLACE AT 3:30 P.M. JULY 17TH AT COTTON EXCHANGE IN SOUTH BOMBAY. A CROWD OF FROM 4 TO 5,000 GATHERED TO HEAR THE SPEAKERS AND FROM ACCOUNTS IT WAS RESPONSIVE, AND THE POLICE HAD SOME DIFFICULTY IN GETTING THROUGH TO ARREST THE SPEAKERS. SEVEN WERE ARRESTED APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES AFTER THE SPEAKING BEGAN. SIX WERE JAN SAGH AND ONE SARVODAYA WORKER. THERE WAS, OF COURSE, NO REFERENCE TO THIS IN THE LOCAL PRESS TODAY WHICH NO LONGER CARRIES REPORTS OF ARRESTS.

4. JULY 18 "SATYAGRAHA" ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE IN DADAR IN CENTRAL BOMBAY AND WILL BE LED BY THE SOCIALIST PARTY. TOMORROW'S EFFORT IN NORTH BOMBAY WILL BE LED BY CONGRESS-O.

5. POSTERS ARE APPEARING IN BOMBAY'S WORKING CLASS AREAS WHICH READ AS FOLLOWS: "YOUR DUTY. 15 PAISE FOR LIBERTY. EVERY INDIAN SHOULD WRITE A POSTCARD TO; MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED, PRESIDENT OF INDIA, NEW DELHI. 'I OPPOSE EMERGENCY. I CONDEMN IT'." LONDON TIMES EDITORIAL OF JULY 1, ENTITLED "INDIAN DICTATOR" HAS BEEN
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REPRINTED AND CIRCULATED WIDELY.

6. GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE GUJARAT BLD, NAVIN PATEL, HAS TOLD A CONGEN BOMBAY POL ASSISTANT THAT THE JANATA FRONT GOVERNMENT WAS DIVIDED ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN AGITATION AGAINST THE EMERGENCY, CENSORSHIP, ETC. JANA SANGH JHPARMENTLY FAVORS MINISTERIAL PARTICIPATION ON THE TAMIL NADU PATTERN, THE BLD AND SOCIALISTS PREFER TO AVOID JEOPARDIZING THE FRONT GOVERNMENT, AND THE CONGRESS (O) IS NEUTRAL. THE JANA SAGH WILL SPEARHEAD A STATEWIDE "SATYAGRAHA" ON JULY 26. WHETHER OR NOT THE JANATA FRONT MINISTERS WILL PARTICIPATE IS STILL UP IN THE AIR.

PAMPHLETS CRITICAL OF THE EMERGENCY ARE CIRCULATING IN GUJARAT, AND THE PREAMBLE OF THE CONSTITUTION IS BEING WIDELY DISTRIBUTED WITH THE ALLEGED CONNIVANCE OF THE JANTA FRONT GOV-

ERNMENT. SOURCE INDICATES THE LATTER IS RUNNING SMOOTHLY.

7. SARVODAYA JOURNAL "BHUMI PUTRA" (SON OF SOIL), PUBLISHED
THRICE MONTHLY AT BARODA (CIRCULATION 15,000), PUBLISHED IN JULY
6 ISSUE LETTERS WRITTEN BY EX-MINISTER OF STATE MOHAN DHARIA,
AMUL DESAI (EX-FIN MIN GOG), AND SHANTI PATEL, FORMER MAYOR BOM-
BAY, WHICH WERE CRITICAL OF THE EMERGENCY. IN THE SAME ISSUE,
THE EDITOR CALLS FOR DEMONSTRATION.

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0043

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

8. THREE UNDERGROUND BENGALI LANGUAGE PAPERS HAVE SURFACED IN CALCUTTA, EACH OF WHICH HAS PUBLISHED ONE ISSUE. ONLY ONE OF THE THREE ADVOCATES VIOLENCE. ALL ARE BADLY WRITTEN, BADLY PRO-CONFIDENTIAL

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DUCED, AND PROBABLY DO NOT HAVE A COMBINED READERSHIP OF MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND. THESE PAPERS ARE THE ONLY CONCRETE EVIDENCE KNOWN TO US OF ANY OPPOSITION IN CALCUTTA.

9. A HIGH RANKING OFFICIAL IN THE GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND IN DELHI FOR A CONFERENCE TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT THE EMERGENCY HAS HAD NO EFFECT IN NAGALAND, WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER PRESIDENTIAL RULE SINCE MARCH OF THIS YEAR. POLITICAL COMPETITION BETWEEN THE STATE'S TWO MAJOR PARTIES CONTINUES AS USUAL IN ANTICIPATION OF STATE ELECTIONS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR NEXT FEBRUARY.

1. THE GOI HAS REPORTEDLY WITHDRAWN THE PERMISSION EARLIER GRANTED TO FAMILY MEMBERS OF IMPRISONED POLITICIANS TO VISIT THEM. MRS. PILOO MODY (AN AMERICAN CITIZEN) WAS TOLD THIS WEEK BY POLICE AUTHORITIES THAT HER BLD MP HUSBAND COULD NOT BE VISITED BY HER UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. MODY IS PHYSICALLY WELL AND BEING TREATED AS A CLASS A PRISONER, MEANING HE HAS HIS OWN COOK, BOOKS, ETC. BUT JAIL AUTHORITIES HAVE REFUSED PERMISSION FOR AN AIR CONDITIONER (ALLOWED HIM FOR MEDICAL REASONS UNDER JAIL REGULATIONS), NOTING THAT THE USUAL REGULATION BOOK IS OVERRIDDEN BY "HIGHER AUTHORITY" UNDER THE EMERGENCY. MRS. MODY SAYS THAT TWO OF THE IMPRISONED OPPOSITION LEADERS ARE IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AND THAT THE GENERAL FEELING ON THE PART OF ALL THOSE IN JAIL IS REPORTED TO BE THAT THEY WILL BE THERE FOR A LONG TIME.

11. IN HER REMARKS TO A CONFERENCE OF STATE ANTI-CORRUPTION AND CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION OFFICERS ON JULY 17, PRIME MINISTER GANDHI SAID THAT IT WAS "TOO EARLY TO RELAX VIGILANCE. EMERGENCY REGULATIONS HAVE TO BE ENFORCED WITH STRICTNESS." SHE CLAIMED THAT BOMBS AND WEAPONS WERE STILL BEING FOUND, NOT ONLY AT RSS HEADQUARTERS, BUT EVERYWHERE. PERHAPS RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF THE SORT WE REPORTED REFTTEL, MRS. GANDHI WARNED AGAINST MISUSE OF POWER BY AUTHORITY AND SAID THERE SHOULD BE NO HARRASSMENT OF COMMON PEOPLE OR LAW-ABIDING TRADERS. FALSE ALLEGATIONS WERE A FORM OF CORRUPTION NO LESS THAN BRIBERY AND NEPOTISM.

12. COMMENTING ON THE FOREIGN PRESS REACTION TO DEVELOPMENTS IN

INDIA, MRS. GANDHI SAID THAT IN THE LAST FEW YEARS WHENEVER THEY
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MENTIONED INDIA THEY WOULD INVARIABLY SAY "STARVING INDIA." SHE
CHIDED WESTERN COMMENTATORS FOR PRAISING CHINA DESPITE THE FACT
THAT FEW WERE ALLOWED TO TRAVEL FREELY IN CHINA. THE OFFICIAL
PRESS RELEASE OF HER JULY 17 REMARKS QUOTES HER AS SAYING:
"HOWEVER, WE MUST BE ALERT TO THE FACT THAT THERE ARE MANY FORCES
WHICH WANT TO INTERFERE IN THE IN-
TERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES AND WHICH WERE FINANCING DIS-
RUPTIVE ACTIVITY." (COMMENT: THE PRIME MINISTER DOES NOT SPECIFY
WHO THESE "MANY FORCES" ARE, ALTHOUGH SHE REFERS TO THEM FOLLOW-
ING HER REMARKS ABOUT WESTERN COMMENTATORS.)

13. THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS ABOUT ENFORCING THE REGULATIONS
WITH STRICTNESS WERE ECHOED BY CONGRESS PARTY PRESIDENT BAROOAH
IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE JULY 19TH ISSUE OF CURRENT. HE IS RE-
PORTED AS SAYING THAT MORE RESTRICTIONS WILL BE IMPOSED. "THE
20-POINT PROGRAMME IS NOT THE LAST WORD. IT IS ONLY A CONTINUING
PROCESS. MORE RESTRICTIONS WILL BE IMPOSED AND MORE MEASURES
TAKEN, TILL SUCH TIME AS WE ARE ABLE TO BRING ABOUT BASIC SOCIAL
CHANGES, BASED ON SOCIAL JUSTICE." BAROOAH IS FURTHER QUOTED AS
SAYING THAT THERE ARE OPPORTUNISTIS IN THE CONGRESS PARTY,
"SOME OF THEM RIGHT AT THE TOP, HOSTILE TO THE PARTY PROGRAMME
AND THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP."

14. COMMENTING ON COORDINATION BETWEEN THE CPI AND THE CONGRESS
PARTY, BAROOAH REPORTEDLY SAID: "AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IT IS A
QUESTION OF ACCEPTANCE ON PRINCIPLE. BUT THE MAIN ACTIVITY OF
ANY POLITICAL PARTY IS IN THE STATES AND THE DISTRICTS. AND THAT
WILL VARY FROM PLACE TO PLACE. IN CERTAIN PLACES THERE IS NO
CPI UNIT. IN GUJARAT, THERE IS HARDLY ANY CPI. BUT IN KERALA,
THE CPI IS IN THE GOVERNMENT. WE ARE SUPPORTING THEM AND WORKING
TOGETHER. IN WEST BENGAL, THEY ARE A BIG PARTY AND WE COOPERATE.
IN BIHAR ALSO. BY AND LARGE WE WILL BE ABLE TO WORK TOGETHER." IN
RESPONSE TO A QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THIS KIND OF COORDINATION
WOULD LEAD TO GREATER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CONGRESS AND CPI,
BAROOAH WAS QUOTED AS SAYING: "WE HAVE CERTAINLY AN UNDERSTAND-
ING ABOUT THE PROGRAMMES AND ULTIMATE OBJECTIVES."

15. CONGRES MP'S INFORM US THAT THE FIRST DAY OF PARLIAMENT ON
JULY 21 WILL BE DEVOTED TO A GOI-SPONSORED RESOLUTION JUSTIFY-
ING THE EMERGENCY. THE RESOLUTION WILL BE INTRODUCED BY AGRI-
CULTURAL MINISTER JAGJIVAN RAM. OTHER BUSINESS DURING THE BRIEF
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SESSION WILL INCLUDE PASSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION, THE VARIOUS EXECUTIVE ORDERS THAT HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED, EXTENSION OF PRESIDENTIAL RULE IN NAGALAND AND THE PONDICHERRY BUDGET. THERE IS ALSO STILL SPECULATION OVER WHETHER MRS. GANDHI WILL TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO INTRODUCE A PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT THROUGH CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, OR TO LEGISLATE AWAY HER DISQUALIFICATION PENALTY STAYED BY THE SUPREME COURT.

16. AS REPORTED EARLIER, AT LEAST SOME PRESS WILL BE PERMITTED TO ATTEND THE SESSIONS, BUT ACCORDING TO ONE CONGRESS MP, THEIR REPORTING WILL BE RESTRICTED TO SPEECHES GIVEN BY GOI MINISTERS. FOR THE REMARKS OF OTHER MP'S, THE PRESS WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED TO CITE THEIR NAMES AND THE FACT THAT THEY SPOKE. WESTERN JOURNALISTS EXPECT TO LEARN JULY 19 WHETHER THEY WILL BE ALLOWED TO COVER THE SESSION.

17. CPM MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT A.K. GOPALAN -- PREVIOUSLY BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED -- HAS TOLD THE PRESS THAT HE WOULD BE ATTENDING THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION ON JULY 21. WHETHER THE 31 OTHER CPM MP'S (25 FROM THE LOK SABHA AND 7 FROM THE RAJYA SABHA) WILL ALSO ATTEND IS UNCERTAIN.

18. IN ADDITION TO GOPALAN, BLD MP H. M. PATEL IS ALSO CONFIRMED AS BEING FREE, CONTRARY TO OUR NEW DELHI 9362.
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Message Attributes

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